High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) Program

# Application Form

# Planning

Applicants for Planning funds are required to submit this Application Form and other documents as outlined in Section E of this application. Please complete this document and provide any supporting documentation electronically. Supporting documentation should be logically and descriptively labeled. For each question, enter the appropriate information in the designated gray box. If a question is not applicable to your project, please indicate "N/A." If you have questions about the HSIPR program or this application, please contact FRA at HSIPR@dot.gov.

## A. Point of Contact and Project Information

(Must be consistent with information provided on applicant's SF 424)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">(1) Submitting Agency:<br>New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT)</td><td colspan="3">Submitting Agency Authorized Representative Name and Title:<br>Michael P. Pillsbury, PE, Deputy Commissioner</td></tr>
<tr><td>Street Address / City:<br>7 Hazen Drive</td><td>City:<br>Concord</td><td>State:<br>NH</td><td>Zip Code:<br>03302</td><td>Telephone Number: 603-271-1484<br>Email:<br>mpillsbury@dot.state.nh.us</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Application Point of Contact (POC) Name and Title (If different): Christopher Morgan</td><td colspan="3">Application POC Telephone: 603-271-2565<br>Application POC Email: cmorgan@dot.state.nh.us</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">(2) Name(s) of additional States applying (if applicable):<br><br>N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">(3) Planning Project Name (Please provide a clear, concise, and descriptive name, example "Capital City to Hill Valley Corridor Service Development Plan"):<br><br>New Hampshire Capitol Corridor Service Development Plan</td></tr>
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**(4) Describe the corridor service(s) that is (are) the subject of the Planning Project, including corridor name, endpoints, major intermediate cities, and other characteristics** (upload a map if applicable):

This project will lead to new intercity passenger rail service on the New Hampshire Main Line between Boston, MA and Concord, NH. There is currently commuter service operated by a contractor for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) between Boston and Lowell, MA, and no passenger service north of Lowell. The corridor includes Nashua, Manchester, and Concord, New Hampshire's three largest cities, and the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport, the largest airport in northern New England. The rail line is currently an active freight line and is owned by Pan Am Railways in New Hampshire and the MBTA in Massachusetts.

**(5) Planning Project Abstract** (In 3 - 5 sentences, please describe your proposed planning project):

This project includes planning work leading to engineering, design and construction on improvements to initiate intercity passenger rail service on the rail corridor between Boston, MA and Concord, NH, a distance of 73 miles. The planning project will include completion of alternatives analysis to complement a Federal Transit Administration alternatives analysis project, preparation of a service development plan for the Boston-Concord corridor, and preparation of a service-level environmental document for the Boston-Concord corridor.

**(6) 6a. Total Cost of Planning Project** (2010 dollars): **$ 2,800,000**

- **Amount Requested from HSIPR Program: $ 2,240,000**
- **Non-Federal Match Amount: $ 560,000**

**6b. Indicate the source, amount, and percentage of matching funds:**

| Non-FRA Funding Sources | New or Existing Funding Source? | Status of Funding[1] | Type of Funds | Dollar Amount *Should total Non-Federal Amount in above 6a. | % of Total Project Cost | Describe any uploaded supporting documentation to help FRA verify funding source |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State Capital Budget (bond) | Existing | Committed | State | 560,000 | 20 | Chapter 264:20, Laws of 2007 |
| | New | Committed | | | | |
| | New | Committed | | | | |
| | New | Committed | | | | |

**(7) Which of the following planning activities are proposed to be funded under the HSIPR Program?** NOTE: Eligible planning projects for these funds include either 1) State Rail Plans or 2) Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plans.

[1] Reference Notes: The following categories and definitions are applied to funding sources:

**Committed:** Committed sources are programmed capital funds that have all the necessary approvals (e.g. legislative referendum) to be used to fund the proposed project without any additional action. These capital funds have been formally programmed in the State Rail Plan and/or any related local, regional, or state Capital Investment Program (CIP) or appropriation. Examples include dedicated or approved tax revenues, state capital grants that have been approved by all required legislative bodies, cash reserves that have been dedicated to the proposed project, and additional debt capacity that requires no further approvals and has been dedicated by the sponsoring agency to the proposed project.

**Budgeted:** This category is for funds that have been budgeted and/or programmed for use on the proposed project but remain uncommitted, (i.e., the funds have not yet received statutory approval). Examples include debt financing in an agency-adopted CIP that has yet to be committed in their near future. Funds will be classified as budgeted where available funding cannot be committed until the grant is executed, or due to the local practices outside of the project sponsor's control (e.g., the project development schedule extends beyond the State Rail Program period).

**Planned:** This category is for funds that are identified and have a reasonable chance of being committed, but are neither committed nor budgeted. Examples include proposed sources that require a scheduled referendum, requests for state/local capital grants, and proposed debt financing that has not yet been adopted in the agency's CIP.

Applicants seeking to develop a passenger rail corridor investment plan must apply for any necessary work to develop *both* a service development plan and corridor-wide environmental documentation. If the applicant has already completed one of these documents or a component thereof, FRA must have accepted that document as meeting the minimum requirements outlined in Section 2.4.1 of the FY2010 Planning NOFA.

☐ State Rail Plans

☒ Service Development Planning and "Service" or "Tier 1" NEPA

☐ Service Development Planning only ("Service" or "Tier 1" NEPA already complete)

☐ "Service" or "Tier 1" NEPA only (Service Development Planning already complete)

**(8) 8a. Describe the service attributes of the Program/Project for which you are planning** *(check all that apply):*

☐ Additional Service Frequencies
☒ New Service
☐ Service Quality Improvements
☐ Improved On-Time performance on Existing Route
☐ Increased Average Speeds/Shorter Trip Times
☐ Other *(Please Describe):*

**8b. Please provide an overview of the characteristics of the Program/Project for which you are planning, including a description of the types of improvements under consideration, and if applicable, the intercity passenger rail proposal:**

The project will include track, signal, and communication system improvements, purchase of equipment, construction of stations and other facilities to initiate new intercity rail service between Boston, MA and Concord, NH,a distance of 73 miles. This corridor is a segment of the Northern New England High Speed Rail Corridor from Boston-Montreal (329 miles), and improvements will contribute to future development of high speed rail on the corridor. The existing freight line north of Lowell is primarily single track, jointed rail maintained to FRA Class II with temporary speed restrictions that affect train speeds. The line has a block signal system. The project will require extensive track and signal upgrades and construction of passing tracks between Lowell and Concord., to include welded rail, ties, and ballast, turnouts, drainage improvements, crossing reconstruction, and bridge inspection and repair as necessary. Stations and platforms are proposed at Concord, Manchester, Manchester-Boston Regional Airport, and Nashua. Station platform or track improvements may be required at Lowell or Boston North Station to accommodate the intercity rail service. The project will identify the equipment needed for the proposed service and prepare for procurement of passenger cars and locomotives. The intercity passenger service in this corridor will provide a rail connection to Boston for the most populous corridor in New Hampshire. It will provide a rail connection to Manchester-Boston Regional Airport, which currently has only very limited bus access, and will create an intermodal connection through an airport station. The airport served 3.18 million passengers in 2009. It will supplement extensive commuter and intercity bus service in the corridor.

**(9) What are the anticipated start and end dates for this Planning Project?** ***(mm/yyyy)***

**Start Date:** 09/2010 **End Date:** 02/2012

# B. Statement of Work

## BACKGROUND

*Briefly describe the events that lead to the need for the planning project and the underlying issue that the project will address (less than ½ page).*

Regular passenger rail service between Concord and Boston ended in 1967, with the exception of a brief restoration during a demonstration project in 1980-81. Since the 1980s, numerous studies and plans have supported the return of passenger rail service in portions of this corridor. The corridor includes New Hampshire's three largest cities and suburban towns that have grown rapidly to accommodate demand for housing for the thousands of residents who commute daily to Greater Boston. The population of Hillsborough and Merrimack Counties grew by 46 percent from 1980 to 2008, to over 500,000. The highway system in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire has undergone expansion to manage traffic growth, but the potential for additional expansion is limited. Beginning in 2007, New Hampshire instituted extensive new commuter bus services from Greater Manchester and Nashua to Boston, an investment of $35 million. The service on I-93 was a commitment in the Environmental Impact Statement for improvements to the highway, resulting from an extensive public scoping process that identified the need for expanded transit service. The project included purchase of 16 coaches and construction of three bus terminals, two new park and ride lots, and service and storage facilities for the coaches. The project also provided three years' operating support for the service, for approximately $3.8 million. The NHDOT has also supported private bus service from Concord to Boston with purchase of buses and construction of a new bus terminal and park and ride lot in Concord. The state has determined that public investment in these transit improvements is needed to expand service and leverage the involvement of private bus companies, which could not undertake major commuter bus service expansion on their own. In spite of the highway and transit improvements, the need for passenger rail service has grown due to increases in population and traffic in this corridor as well as concerns about air quality, sprawl and a reliance on single-occupant vehicles. Rail service will address these needs and provide an important additional transportation option for New Hampshire. The access of New Hampshire commuters as well as students, visitors, and other travelers to the Boston area is frequently disrupted by severe traffic congestion, weather incidents, and other factors that affect the highway system.

In 2006, the Community Advisory Committee to the New Hampshire DOT Commissioner recommended expanded passenger rail as one of the five "initial action items" in its final report, a component of the state's long-range transportation plan. In 2007, the New Hampshire legislature created the New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority to establish passenger rail service in New Hampshire. In 2009, the New Hampshire Climate Action Plan prepared by the New Hampshire Climate Change Policy Task Force recommended expanded passenger service as part of a balanced transportation system. These are examples of recent state-level recognition of the need for the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor project.

## GENERAL OBJECTIVE

*Provide a general description of the planning work to be accomplished through this grant, including project work effort, project study area, and other parties involved. Describe the end-state of the project, and the outcomes that will be achieved as a result of this project.*

The planning work to be carried out will include the following three major tasks:

- Develop information to contribute to alternatives analysis between Boston and Concord
- Prepare Service Development Plan: Rationale, Service Plan, Capital Investment Needs Assessment, Financial Forecast, Public Benefits Assessment, Program Management Approach
- Conduct service Environmental Review: Concord-Boston intercity rail environmental document

The study area is the Concord-Manchester-Nashua-Boston rail corridor, a 73-mile corridor connecting New Hampshire's and Massachusetts' state capitals. The corridor presently has commuter rail service between Boston and Lowell, MA (25 miles), but only freight service north of Lowell. The corridor parallels portions of I-93 in New Hampshire, the Everett Turnpike in New Hampshire and US Route 3 in Massachusetts. Average daily traffic on the Everett Turnpike at the New Hampshire-Massachusetts state line in 2009 was 88,200.

The study will be closely coordinated with other parties to include: the New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Amtrak and host railroad, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Mass DOT), corridor communities, and Manchester-Boston Regional Airport. [See C.1 below for a discussion of the importance of this project to the airport]. The study will produce a service development plan and service-level NEPA document, to prepare for engineering, final design and construction of the project.

## DESCRIPTION OF WORK

*Describe the tasks of the planning project from start to finish. A task 1 – Detailed Planning Project Workplan – shall be included. Under the cooperative agreement, FRA will participate in the project, as described in this Statement of Work, through review draft work products and acceptance of task deliverables. Group the tasks into major and minor components and relate the major components to milestones and deliverables. Address inter-relationships between tasks. Identify the milestones for which FRA review of draft work products is anticipated. (For more detailed studies it may be appropriate for FRA to participate in the development of methodologies.) Address necessary coordination and processes to involve affected parties and the public as appropriate.*

Detailed Planning Work Plan.

1. Alternatives Analysis. The details of a proposed intercity rail service will be explored in this study, including station stops, trip times, frequency of service, weekday and weekend schedules. NHDOT expects to coordinate the development of this information with Amtrak. The information developed on intercity service alternatives will contribute to the service development plan. NHDOT also anticipates undertaking an alternatives analysis under Federal Transit Administration guidelines during 2010 and 2011, for the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor. Although the FTA Alternatives Analysis leads to commuter rail projects funded through the New Starts program, other alternatives, including intercity rail, are included in the review. It is anticipated that this Alternatives Analysis will include an intercity rail alternative. The FTA funding for the Alternatives Analysis is limited to the corridor with Manchester as its northern terminus. In order to fully evaluate the intercity rail alternative, NHDOT anticipates including tasks from this analysis in its FRA planning project: developing and screening alternatives, travel markets, and reviewing existing services. The tasks to be included in the FRA planning project will be limited to intercity rail in the corridor between Boston and Concord. NHDOT will closely coordinate with FRA and FTA in pursuing this and other tasks in the planning project.

2. Service Development Plan. This project will include preparation of a Service Development Plan (SDP), with the elements listed below. To develop the SDP, NHDOT first anticipates working with Amtrak to develop data on ridership demand in the corridor, using operations modeling and train performance calculations. This will inform the frequency, station locations, schedule, and other aspects of the plan.

*Rationale:* A review of the corridor challenges and opportunities, including travel demand and capacity constraints, and an analysis of modal alternatives to include ridership, costs, benefits, and other impacts for the alternatives. The rationale will include a description of the relationship between the proposed service and other regional assets such as the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport or goals such as downtown redevelopment in Manchester, Nashua and other communities.

*Service Plan:* This will include a detailed description of the proposed intercity service on the corridor, including schedule, frequency, station locations, intermodal connections with the associated potential for transit-oriented development and enhanced ridership, and proposed train consists. It will also include operation simulation, equipment and crew scheduling, and issues related to shared facilities.

*Capital Investment Plan:* NHDOT will work with Amtrak and other partners, based on the results of operations modeling, to evaluate the capital needs for the project. This will include track infrastructure, such as the need for sidings or passing track, rolling stock, and other facilities needed for the service, and will include cost estimates and schedules for capital improvements.

*Financial Forecast:* To develop a clear financial forecast for the service, a set of projections for travel demand derived from the initial planning effort, revenues, and operating expenses will be prepared. The projections for operating expenses will include train operations, maintenance of track and equipment, marketing, ticketing and other services and administration. The forecast will also detail the proposed cost-sharing arrangements with railroad operators and owners.

*Public Benefits Assessment:* This portion of the plan will describe benefits to the users of the service and the broader community and will describe and quantify the economic value of benefits. Included in this analysis will be job creation and retention, environmental benefits, energy savings, and community livability.

*Program Management:* The plan will include an implementation strategy describing how NHDOT will ensure quality, cost and budget control, and organizational plans for moving the project ahead. NHDOT anticipates assigning a project manager to the project to directly oversee project consultants and be responsible for the implementation of the project and its components.

3. Project Environmental Review. It is anticipated that a project environmental review will be conducted as part of this project, subject to consultation with FRA. This review will address corridor-wide effects related to the proposed service, taking into account the station locations and plans, service schedule and level of operation, type of equipment used, ridership, and infrastructure improvements. A draft environmental assessment was prepared for NHDOT for a proposed commuter rail extension between Lowell and Nashua, and it will provide useful data for that portion of the Boston-Concord corridor.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

The period of performance for the above work shall be 18 months, beginning Sept. 1, 2010 and ending Feb. 28, 2012. This time frame includes an estimated six months for NHDOT project management prior to retaining consultant assistance.

## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND DELIVERABLES

**The Grantee shall provide FRA with a projected schedule to achieve the deliverables and performance objectives listed below. The Grantee shall achieve these performance objectives in order for the project to be considered complete.**

*List tasks, including task 1 – Detailed Planning Project Workplan and Schedule, that are required in order to complete the project, as applicable.*

1. Detailed Planning Project Work Plan, Schedule & Detailed Budget
2. Program Management
3. Alternatives Analysis Report
4. Project Rationale Report
5. Service Operating Plan
6. Capital Investment Plan
7. Financial Forecast
8. Public Benefits Analysis
9. Service Level Environmental Document

**PROJECT ESTIMATE/BUDGET**

*Provide an overall cost summary in this section with a detailed description of project costs by element attached as an appendix if needed.*

The total estimated cost of the Project is [Total Project Cost $2,800,000], for which the FRA grant will contribute an estimated [FRA Share 80%] of the total cost, but no more than [$2,240,000]. Any additional expense required beyond that provided in this grant to complete the project shall be borne by the Grantee. (See attached budget for additional financial details of the project.)

| **New Hampshire Capitol Corridor Planning (FRA Grant)** | |
|---|---|
| Task 1 -- Detailed Planning Project Work Plan | $ 50,000 |
| Task 2 – Program Management | $ 145,000 |
| Task 3 – Alternatives Analysis Report | $ 180,000 |
| Task 4 – Project Rationale Report | $ 125,000 |
| Task 5 – Service Operating Plan | $ 600,000 |
| Task 6 -- Capital Investment Plan | $ 400,000 |
| Task 7 -- Financial Forecast | $ 400,000 |
| Task 8 -- Public Benefits Analysis | $ 300,000 |
| Task 9 -- Service Level Environmental Document | $ 600,000 |
| Subtotal | $2,800,000 |

| Total | | |
|---|---|---|
| FRA (80% of project cost): | $ | 2,240,000 |
| Grantee Contribution (20% of project cost): | $ | 560,000 |
| **Total Project Cost:** | **$** | **2,800,000** |

## PROJECT COORDINATION

*List major partners, sub-awardees or sub-grantees that will be implementing this program. In addition, please attach a basic organizational chart as an appendix showing the titles/company name of those with authority to make management decisions and those with direct project management responsibility.*

**The Grantee shall perform all tasks required for the project through a coordinated process; including as appropriate all railroad owners, operators, and funding partners within the project area. Under the cooperative agreement, FRA will participate in the Project, as described in this statement of work.**

- Pan Am Railways
- NH Rail Transit Authority
- Amtrak
- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority/ Massachusetts DOT
- FRA
- FTA

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

*Describe any critical assumptions, special requirements and contingency plans. Provide updated project management plan as an attachment if needed. Describe how the project will be monitored and evaluated for progress.*

NHDOT will assign a project manager to oversee the planning project, utilizing project funds. The Department will retain consultant assistance through its established consultant selection process, a qualifications-based selection process that is compliant with Federal and State laws and regulations. Resources available to the NH Rail Transit Authority (NHRTA) will also be utilized. NHDOT projects undergo regular, routine reviews to ensure adherence to budget and project schedules. The project manager and other NHDOT senior staff will meet regularly with project consultants to monitor progress. The NHRTA board of directors meets monthly, and along with other partners will receive regular reports on the progress of the HSIPR planning project.

NHDOT anticipates beginning work on an updated State Rail Plan during 2010. This project will be closely coordinated with the State Rail Plan, and information generated during the Rail Plan will be used in the HSIRP planning project. The Rail Plan will include a significant public and stakeholder involvement component, which will also be used to the extent possible to provide public outreach on the HSIRP planning project.

NHDOT will coordinate the project closely with both FRA and FTA, to ensure that tasks are assigned to the appropriate funding source. This will begin following grant approval with meetings with FTA and FRA to clarify the scope of the work to be funded by each respective agency. FTA funding is limited to tasks related to alternatives analysis for service south of Manchester. This will include a range of alternatives for

travel from Manchester to Boston, public outreach and input on these alternatives, and development of a locally preferred alternative. Alternatives could include commuter rail from Manchester to Boston or segments of that corridor, bus service, and an intercity rail service, or combinations of these alternatives. FRA funding is limited to intercity service and excludes commuter service. NHDOT will ensure that project expenditures are governed by these constraints and will closely coordinate the associated tasks. Regular reports to both Federal agencies will maintain clear oversight and progress reporting on the project.

# C. Response to Evaluation Criteria

**(1) Potential Transportation and Public Benefits.**

Please identify:

For Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plans:

- The clarity and detail with which the applicant has identified the problem to be addressed by the proposed service;
- The market potential of the corridor being studied, taking into consideration such factors as population, density, economic activity, and travel patterns;
- The potential for the corridor to deliver high-speed and intercity passenger rail service benefits, including ridership, on-time performance, travel time, service frequencies, safety and other factors;
- The potential of the corridor program to promote economic development, including contributions to a sustainable U.S. manufacturing and supply base;
- The potential of the corridor program to enhance energy efficiency and environmental quality;
- The potential of the corridor program to promote interconnected livable communities, including complementing local or state efforts to concentrate higher-density, mixed-use, development in areas proximate to multi-modal transportation options (including intercity passenger rail stations); and
- The consideration of other transportation modes in the planning process.

For State Rail Plans:

- The clarity and detail with which the applicant has identified the problems to be addressed by the State's vision for rail transportation and rail investment program;
- The potential for the State rail plan to lead to passenger and freight rail service benefits, including ridership, on-time performance, travel time, service frequencies, goods movement, safety and other factors;
- The potential of the State rail plan to promote economic development, including contributions to a sustainable U.S. manufacturing and supply base;
- The potential of the State rail plan to enhance energy efficiency and environmental quality;
- The potential of the State rail plan to promote interconnected livable communities, including complementing local or state efforts to concentrate higher-density, mixed-use, development in areas proximate to multi-modal transportation options (including intercity passenger rail stations); and
- The integration of the State rail plan with the planning processes of other transportation modes.

As indicated in the Statement of Work, the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor serves the most populous region of New Hampshire, including the state's two largest cities and state capital. The corridor has experienced rapid population growth, and many of the new residents commute to jobs in Greater Boston. The states of New Hampshire and Massachusetts have expanded the highway system to accommodate increasing traffic, and additional expansion is unlikely due to financial and environmental constraints. At a minimum, the advent of passenger rail service will delay the need for further highway widening. Traffic volume at the state line on the Everett Turnpike in Nashua grew by nearly 26 percent from 2002 to 2009, to 88,200 (average daily traffic), and projections are for continued traffic growth in the corridor in both states. A recent review by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission projects that average daily traffic on the Everett Turnpike will exceed capacity at several locations in 2020 (translating to a Level of Service D or below). This is consistent with earlier projections for the Massachusetts segment of the highway (US Route 3 in Massachusetts) that projected Level of Service F at peak hours by 2018, even with the additional lanes that have been constructed.

New Hampshire has instituted commuter bus service serving both Boston and Logan Airport, both on I-93 and the Everett Turnpike/Route 3 to meet the growing demand. Many New Hampshire-Boston commuters (as many as 21 percent of the daily passengers in a 1998 survey) drive to MBTA commuter rail stations in Lowell and North Billerica, contributing to a demand for more station parking. In addition to commuter traffic, there is travel demand in the corridor from weekend travelers and tourists visiting New Hampshire's lakes and mountains and Boston attractions. Students living in New

Hampshire need access to Boston educational institutions. NHDOT believes this corridor needs a rail option to serve these needs, especially given serious traffic congestion that continues to exist in much of the corridor, is expected to grow, and is greatly exacerbated by winter storms and other weather events, highway crashes, and other factors.

The potential of the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor is reflected not only in the fact that close to half the state's population resides in the corridor's communities, but in other factors as well. The corridor will connect the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport to Boston, creating a system in which the three principal Boston-area airports are connected (with the rail connection to Providence). Manchester-Boston Regional Airport is an important economic engine for the State of New Hampshire and the region; creating jobs, facilitating commerce and providing access to the global marketplace. Manchester-Boston Regional Airport contributes over $1 billion annually to the region's economy and accounts for 3,820 jobs in the three-county region contiguous to the airport. The airport connection, through an intermodal station adjacent to a new airport access highway now under construction (illustrated in an attached aerial photo), will create new rail-air connectivity that no other mode can duplicate.

Manchester-Boston Regional Airport strongly supports the development of passenger rail service in New Hampshire as part of a multi-modal solution to meet the growing and changing transportation needs of the region. The airport incorporated a review of passenger rail service (and an anticipated airport rail station) as a focus of its 2010 Master Plan Update and determined that there are important synergies between passenger rail and air passenger transportation systems. Manchester-Boston Regional Airport will benefit from both enplaning passenger (air travelers originating from the area and using passenger rail service to travel to the airport from their home or business) and deplaning passenger (air travelers accessing New England through Manchester-Boston Regional Airport and using passenger rail service to travel from the airport to their final destination) rail ridership. Visitors using Manchester-Boston Regional Airport to access the region for business and leisure spent $752.8 million in 2008, and a rail connection is considered critical to attract additional visitors, especially on international flights.

The service planning study will explore other intermodal connections as well; for example, demand estimation may find that stops in Massachusetts such as the Anderson Transportation Center in Woburn, with express bus service to Logan Airport, may be warranted for their intermodal connections. With service to the downtowns of Nashua, Manchester and Concord, the project will also create reverse commute traffic to employment centers in all three cities. Development of an improved rail corridor will stabilize freight service to New Hampshire's largest rail freight customer, Public Service of New Hampshire's Merrimack Station coal-burning power plant. This plant is a major generator of power for New Hampshire, and is currently being upgraded with a $450 million scrubber project that ensures that it will continue as a source of electricity for many years. Other rail freight shippers and potential shippers will also benefit from an improved infrastructure.

Several previous studies have evaluated the feasibility of restoring passenger rail on portions of the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor. The most recent estimate of ridership was generated for the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission from a travel demand model in 2008. It evaluated five alternative levels of service and projected ridership of between 3570 and 4060 trips per day between Manchester and Boston. The estimates included an additional station in Chelmsford, Mass., (another potential station stop) but did not include a Concord station. Ridership at these levels will result in a significant reduction in vehicle-miles of travel from the level that would exist without a rail service. This will mean significant fuel savings and reductions in emissions of carbon dioxide and ozone precursors in an ozone nonattainment area.

Nashua, Manchester, and Concord have all undertaken downtown revitalization efforts including both public and private entities aimed at encouraging mixed-use development, better access for pedestrians, and other amenities. Manchester is initiating a downtown circulator bus route to encourage further redevelopment in its Millyard district by connecting it to peripheral parking lots. The Manchester rail station will be located in this area, and Nashua and Concord stations will similarly serve downtown areas and spur further development. A 2008 study of the economic impacts of the Downeaster rail service found that markets for transit-oriented development are especially strong in the station communities, and projected significant growth in housing, retail and office construction, jobs, visitor spending and tax revenue in those communities. With vibrant downtowns in the three principal New Hampshire Capitol Corridor station communities, this planning project is expected to find similar effects in Nashua, Manchester and Concord. Development of intercity rail service on the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor will support initiatives for livable communities in New Hampshire that have strong local support.

A 2007 statewide survey conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center found that 87% of those surveyed supported extending passenger rail into New Hampshire. Support was strong in all regions, and 64% "strongly" supported passenger rail.

As noted above, this planning project will be closely coordinated with an alternatives analysis funded by the FTA, and as

such will consider all modes in developing plans for the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor. NHDOT believes that the corridor should be treated as a system of complementary and connecting modes, and will follow this approach during the planning project.

**(2) Future Program Viability and Sustainability.**

Please identify:

- The likelihood that the final deliverables (Service Development Plan, Environmental Document, or State Rail Plan) will be ready and capable of being implemented;
- The demonstrated commitment of the State and other stakeholders to quickly execute the program once planning is complete;
- The degree to which the planning process meaningfully incorporates input from affected communities, local governments, regional councils and planning organizations, neighboring States, railroads, transportation modal partners, environmental interests, the public and other stakeholders – early and throughout the process;
- The likelihood that the corridor programs being studied can yield measurable service and public benefits in a reasonable period of time;
- The demonstrated ability of the applicant to support the future capital and operating needs of the corridor(s) being studied;
- The thoroughness of the proposed deliverables;
- The quality of proposed methodology and assumptions; and
- The applicant's contribution of a cost share greater than the required minimum of 20 percent.

The project NHDOT proposes to fund with this application represents the next step in a process of developing passenger rail on the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor that dates back many years and has been supported by numerous feasibility studies. The state legislature created the New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority with the express purpose of implementing a passenger rail service in the corridor (RSA 238-A). The legislature also enacted a cap on liability from passenger rail operations, mindful that liability can be a major obstacle to implementing new projects (RSA 238-A:18). While legislative decisions and budgeting cannot be predicted in advance, there is strong support for the project and a commitment on the part of state and local governments as well as private sector partners to move the project forward to construction and operation. NHDOT's commitment to implement its I-93 commuter bus expansion project, successfully launched in November 2008, is one example of a project commitment made and honored by the state. This included a major commitment of CMAQ funds, a limited Federal funding source much in demand in the nonattainment areas for transit and traffic-flow improvement projects. The commitment of CMAQ operating support is limited to three years, but NHDOT will discuss with the bus operator

options for continued support, if needed for the commuter bus service.

The NHDOT has worked closely with a variety of constituencies in developing this project. The NHRTA has 28 board members representing communities, planning commissions/metropolitan planning organizations, and other constituencies, and it will play a key role in fostering public and stakeholder involvement. The NHDOT will soon begin work on its State Rail Plan, and a strong public and stakeholder involvement process developed for the plan will contribute to this project as well. NHDOT has discussed this project with Amtrak officials on several occasions, and looks forward to a strong continuing relationship with Amtrak in working on the planning effort.

New Hampshire's interest in developing passenger rail service on the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor is motivated by concerns about traffic congestion, air pollution and other environmental factors, a shift to more livable downtowns that support transit modes, and a very limited and expensive parking supply in Boston, among other factors. For these reasons, it is anticipated that implementing rail service will yield immediate benefits in response to demand that has built up over many years. The experience of the Downeaster and of the I-93 and Nashua commuter bus programs, where initial ridership was strong and has grown steadily, supports this contention. Even in 1980-81, a short demonstration project that restored rail service from Concord, Manchester and Nashua to Boston had strong ridership, especially considering an unfavorable trip time and very limited schedule.

The commitment of numerous stakeholders to passenger rail has been illustrated by over $121,000 in private donations that funded technical support to prior grant requests. State and local officials have discussed station sites and joint development concepts with private developers on numerous occasions, and found considerable interest in public-private partnerships for station development that would support the project as a whole. NHDOT and the Rail Transit Authority participated in the initial regional discussion with Amtrak of the PRIIA Section 209 process and the development of a methodology to determine state support for intercity rail services, and the state will continue to work actively with Amtrak and other states in monitoring that process.

NHDOT led a previous preliminary engineering and environmental assessment consultant effort for a commuter rail extension on a segment of the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor (from Lowell-Nashua). Although the project did not proceed through the FTA New Starts process, the work efforts were successfully completed and met the program's requirements. DOT's experience with project management, described below, will ensure that this planning effort is completed on time and will accomplish the goals of producing a comprehensive service development plan and environmental document.

The 20 percent matching funds for this project are included in the state's Capital Budget, enacted by the Legislature and signed into law by the Governor on June 30, 2009. The Capital Budget is the state's bond program, and includes a variety of state building projects as well as matching funds for a variety of purposes. Bonds are sold by the State Treasurer upon commitment of the funds through consultant or construction contracts for individual projects.

**(3) Project Delivery Approach.**

Describe qualifications of the applicant and its key partners to successfully complete the planning activities, including the following information:

- The applicant's financial, legal, and technical capacity to implement the project;
- The applicant's experience in administering similar grants and planning efforts;
- The soundness and thoroughness of the cost methodologies and assumptions, and estimates for the proposed planning activities;
- The reasonableness and timeliness of the milestone and completion schedule;
- The thoroughness and quality of the Statement of Work;
- The timing and amount of the project's future noncommitted investments;
- The comprehensiveness and sufficiency, at the time of application, of agreements with key partners that will be involved in conducting the planning effort; and
- The overall completeness and quality of the application, including the comprehensiveness of its supporting documentation.

[see D (1) below]

# D. Optional Additional Information

**(1) Please provide any additional information, comments, or clarifications and indicate the section and question number that you are addressing** (e.g., Section A, Question 6). *This section is optional.*

[Previous question]: The NHDOT is the state's transportation agency, with extensive experience managing large and complex transportation projects. The Department's annual budget is $565 million. The NHDOT through its Bureau of Rail & Transit previously administered a preliminary engineering project for a commuter rail extension from Lowell-Nashua, and participated in the three-state Boston-Montreal High Speed Rail Feasibility Study Phase I with Vermont and Massachusetts. Experienced project management staff at the Department will be assigned to this project to ensure it remains on schedule and milestones and budget targets are attained.

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation was established and its functions defined by RSA 21-L:2 (Laws of 1985, Chapter 402), which combined the former public works and highways department with rail, aeronautics, and transit functions from other agencies. Other state laws specifically authorize the Department to undertake a variety of mass transportation projects (RSA 228:71). The Department includes the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, and Deputy Commissioner and the Divisions of Aeronautics Rail & Transit, Administration, Project Development, and Operations. Within those divisions, several Bureaus will play a role in this project, including the Bureau of Finance and Contracts, which oversees all transportation expenditures and drawdown of federal funds; the Bureau of Right of Way, responsible for acquisition of property for transportation projects, the Bureau of Highway Design, which oversees preliminary and final design of highway projects, the Bureau of Environment, responsible for environmental permitting, and the Bureau of Construction, responsible for oversight of construction projects. Other entities that may assist with the project are the Department's internal auditor and the labor compliance section, which report to the Commissioner.

An organization chart for the Department is attached.

The Department of Transportation and its predecessor agency have been administering federal rail and public transportation grants since 1980. This function is the responsibility of the Bureau of Rail and Transit, part of the Division of Aeronautics, Rail & Transit, through a designation by the Governor as well as the provisions of state law previously cited. The Bureau has successfully administered the Federal Railroad Administration Local Rail Freight Assistance, rail planning, and rail relocation assistance programs, in addition to numerous capital and other grants from the Federal Transit Administration. The administrator of the Bureau of Rail and Transit is Christopher Morgan, who has held that position since 1994. The Bureau staff includes a rail planner, railroad operations engineer and rail safety inspector/investigator. The Bureau's management is under the direction of Jack Ferns, Director of the Division of Aeronautics, Rail & Transit. The work of the Division is overseen by Michael Pillsbury, Deputy Commissioner.

It is anticipated that consultant assistance will be required to conduct this project. The Department procures all consultant assistance through its established consultant selection process, either through a qualifications-based selection as required by the Brooks Act (40 USC Sec. 541) or through a pre-qualified low-bid procurement. The Department's Highway Design Bureau manages the consultant selection and oversight process for NHDOT consultant projects, and can provide engineering support to this project as well.

The Department also expects to call on the expertise of the New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority and the metropolitan planning organizations in the corridor, the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission and the Nashua Regional Planning Commission, as well as the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission. Together with these partners, the Department will monitor project activities and expenditures to ensure careful financial management and to ensure that the project planning scope is completed within the budget and contract(s). The Department will also seek to anticipate and compensate for changes in project scope, delays in negotiations, and other factors that may be considered risk factors as the project moves forward.

**(2) Optional Supporting Documents** (If you have uploaded documents to *Grants.gov*, please provide document title, filename, and description here):

| Document Title | Filename | Description and Purpose |
|---|---|---|
| Vision for the New England High-Speed and | NE Vision Document.pdf | Regional passenger rail vision statement and map |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Intercity Rail Network | | |
| NHDOT Organization Chart | DOT Org Chart.ppt | NHDOT Organization Chart |
| Service area maps | Microsoft Word - NH Capitol Corridor.pdf | Railroad corridor maps |
| Project Budget supporting information | Budget.xls | Project Budget supporting information |
| Congressional delegation support letter | Delegation letter.pdf | Congressional delegation support letter |
| Governor support letter | Gov letter.pdf | Support letter from Governor John Lynch |
| City of Nashua support letter | Nashua letter.pdf | Support letter from Mayor Donalee Lozeau |
| Manchester Airport support letter | MBRA letter | Support letter from airport director Mark Brewer |
| Southern NH Planning support letter | SNHPC letter.pdf | Support letter from MPO director David Preece |
| Nashua Regional Planning support letter | NRPC letter.pdf | Support letter from MPO director Kerrie Diers |
| GMCC support letter | gmcc letter.pdf | Support letter from Greater Manchester Chamber |
| Conservation Law Foundation support letter | clf letter.pdf | Support letter from CLF vice president Tom Irwin |
| Manchester Airport aerial photo | MHT aerial.doc | Aerial photo of Manchester airport with intermodal connection |
| Speaker of the House support letter | Speaker letter.pdf | Support letter from House Speaker Terie Norelli |
| Senate President support letter | S President letter.pdf | Support letter from Senate President Sylvia Larsen |
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# E. Checklist of Application Materials

| Required Documents | Reference | Description | Format |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☒ HSIPR Planning Application Form | FY 2010 Planning NOFA Section 3.3.1.1 | This document to be submitted as an attachment through *Grants.gov.* | Form |
| ☒ OMB Standard Forms<br>• SF 424: Application for Federal Assistance | FY 2010 Planning NOFA Section 3.3.1.2 | Please submit through *Grants.gov* | Form |

| Required Documents | Reference | Description | Format |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☒ HSIPR Planning Application Form | FY 2010 Planning NOFA Section 3.3.1.1 | This document to be submitted as an attachment through *Grants.gov.* | Form |
| • SF 424A: Budget Information-Non Construction<br>• SF 424B: Assurances-Non Construction | | | |
| ☒ FRA Assurances Document | FY 2010 Planning NOFA Section 3.3.1.3 | May be obtained from FRA's website at http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/admin/assurancesandcertifications.pdf. The document should be signed by an authorized certifying official for the applicant. Submit through *Grants.gov* | Form |
| **Optional Supporting Documents** | **Reference** | **Description** | **Format** |
| ☒ Map of proposed project area | FY 2010 Planning NOFA Section 3.3.1.1 | This document to be submitted as an attachment through *Grants.gov.* | None |
| ☒ Other supporting documents as identified by applicant | FY 2010 Planning NOFA Section 3.3.1.1 | This document to be submitted as an attachment through *Grants.gov.* | None |

**PRA Public Protection Statement:** Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to average 32 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, a federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **2130-0583**.